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## ARTISTS' LIT- TLE GAMES

why he should not paint standing on his head if he chooses; but one wonders what effect a character makes on him when he sees the clothes first. Yet this is the right way to go to work if success be the test—for this gentleman is eminently successful. When you come to think of it, it is just his way of working that his patrons like. They always see the clothes first—and judge their men by them—then they notice the face; and as for the relation of a figure with a background, it's never crossed their retina.

One artist there is, wholly and absolutely sincere, and that is Claude Monet. If his subject was a train leaving a railroad station at "four-fifteen," day after day found him at the time and place. In the ten or fifteen minutes of the train's backing and filling, he would work like a tiger; then, when the train was gone, into the box with palette and colors, that seance was done. It is this absolute adherence to the exact conditions of time and effect, to "*le temps qu'il fait*," which gives Monet's work the startling truth (as well as charm) which it possesses. I remember seeing a painting done in Corsica, which, because it was signed by a Scandinavian name, every one praised as having just the look of Norway. This could not happen with Monet's work. If his picture be of the Riviera, it is full of the warm South; if it be of Norway it makes you shiver to look at it; the Giverny pictures have in them the air of the Seine Valley and of no other place.

If we only could be absolutely sincere, that alone would give our work artistic value; for sincerity guarantees individuality, and it is individuality, personality, which is, and will be still more, the Modern Note.

"Mon verre n'est pas grand,  
Mais,—je bois dans mon verre."

### A VISIT TO WILLIAM MORRIS & BY W. IRVING WAY



FROM Piccadilly Circus to the foot of Hammersmith Bridge is just an hour—if one catches the bus with the right flag. The Upper Mall is hard-bye, though not easy to find, if one loses his head in the maze. "You turn to the right at Bridge Court, pass Mall Road, cross over the foot bridge, and pass the house where Thomson wrote the 'Seasons,' next the Dove's Inn, and there you are, you see." All of which sounds easy enough, if one can identify these landmarks when one sees them. The streets are little more than alleys, the bridge one could almost carry under one's arm, Thomson's house falls beneath one's notice, and The Dove's will just hold a barmaid and a barrel of "bitter." No sign marks the Kelmscott Press, the objective point, but after stumbling into two or three door-ways, the right one is finally reached, and here Mr. S. C. Cockerell, the secretary



of the Press, greets the visitor with a smile, and at once puts him at ease. A quiet, tidy, orderly place it is, but with nothing modern about it. No noise of machinery, escaping steam, or hum of electric motor, distracts one. No mahogany furniture, Axminster rugs, or click of type-writer reminds one of nineteenth century progress. The furniture is plain deal like the floor, and with a "gray goosequill" the visitor registers his arrival in the guest-book.

No Aldine inscription over the door reminds the visitor that he must discuss business matters only in this mecca of the booklover; yet the evidences of industry on every hand are not conducive to garrulity. Posterity may view Mr. Morris in perspective, as we of to-day view Aldus Manutius.

It was on the 29th of April, 1895, that I first visited the Kelmscott Press. The last sheets of Mr. Morris' romance, "Child Christopher and Goldilind the Fair," had just been pulled and were about to go into the bindery. "You may enter our order for ten copies, Mr. Cockerell;" and it was done "with pleasure." This seemed to pave the way to the prime object of my mission, so I ventured to remark that a new departure in a business way had made a trip to England necessary in order to establish some business connections there. My first thought was that Mr. Morris would consent to print a book for us, something that could be issued at a modest price. Now that "Child Christopher" was off the press, and "Chaucer" was progressing satisfactorily, there was a short interim in which Mr. Cockerell thought something small might be undertaken, and indeed Mr. Morris himself had been considering a reprint of Rossetti's "Hand and Soul" among the possibilities. "Perhaps he would like to do that for you. Would you like to see Mr. Morris and talk it over with him?" Being assured that this would be quite agreeable, Mr. Cockerell said he would step over to Kelmscott House, which looks across the Thames to Castlenau, and if Mr. Morris were disengaged he might like to see me—"You know we never interrupt him when he is busy." With Mr. Cockerell's return came the message that "Mr. Morris would like to see me." This was an unexpected pleasure. In the master's work room were to be found the same evidences of industry as in the office of the Press. The large deal table was literally covered with his manuscript, drawings for new ventures, and incunabuli. Mr. Morris had evidently laid aside his work in order to receive me; and no "wild and woolly" Westerner ever had a more cordial reception. With the offer of a cigar and a comfortable seat Mr. Morris gave me some account of the work of the Kelmscott Press, and how he came to undertake it. He wanted to make some nice books, but had no thought of developing such a business as has come to the Press. He showed me the sources of his inspiration, some specimens of marvelous old Venetian printing from the Jenson and other presses, all in perfect state of preservation;

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Aldus' fame had spread throughout Europe, and the visits of the curious and of the learned became a burden upon his time. The following notice was therefore placed over the chief entrance to his printing office: "Whoever you are that wish to see Aldus, be brief; and when business is finished go away; unless indeed you are able and willing to assist him as Hercules did Atlas in his need; and even then remember that whoever gains here a footing must work hard and with perseverance."

A VISIT TO  
WILLIAM  
MORRIS

richly illuminated manuscripts and missals—one dearly loved and long coveted, costing several hundred pounds, had just arrived that day, and as I held the precious treasure in my hand, Mr. Austin Dobson's lines kept running in my head.

*Missal of the Gothic age,  
Missal with the blazoned page,  
Whence, O missal, whither come,  
From what dim scriptorium.*

Many were in their original dresses of stamped pig-skin, yellowed with age, the most durable of all materials used in bookbinding, Mr. Morris thinks. One of his own books printed at the Chiswick Press of Whittingham & Co., and antedating the Kelmscott Press, had also just come in after being for many months in the hands of an artist and illuminator named Reuter, who had decorated its margins with glorious compositions in gold and colors in imitation of the Gothic age. This book was offered to me at cost, about 105 pounds, as Mr. Morris had given the work to Mr. Reuter in order that he might be induced to remain in England. But such work is expensive, and, as I afterwards learned from Mr. Reuter himself, just as he was departing for his home in Geneva, there is not enough of it to do in England to support a first-class artist.

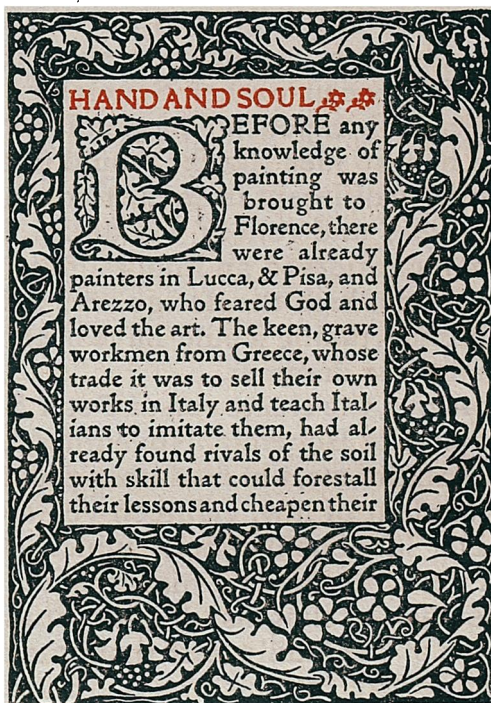
But with these distractions pressing upon me I did not forget my mission, and in time I hinted something of "Hand and Soul," and Mr. Cockerell coming to my assistance, the matter was quickly arranged. I must see Messrs. Ellis and Elvey and ask them to waive copyright, which they did most cheerfully. Mr. Morris would draw a special title, print the book in Golden type, black and red, make it uniform in size with the King Florus Series, and bind in full vellum. All these details would be carefully considered and a price submitted for consideration on my return to America. There was never any question about the price. Do I think Mr. Morris made any money by the transaction? I know he barely covered expenses. The Kelmscott Press is not a money-making venture. Consider the care with which every detail is produced. Mr. Morris does all the designing—the paper is specially made, and costly, the inks are the best that money can buy in a country where vicious chemicals are unknown, the type is set by hand, the sheets are dampened with the greatest care, the type is inked by a hand roller, not "dabbed," but thoroughly inked, and the press-work, all by hand, is as carefully done as if each impression were from an engraved or etched plate. I saw many sheets of the "Chaucer," some with the beautiful compositions of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, pulled from the press, and I do not see how Mr. Morris can hope to make a dollar out of this publication.

Mr. G. W. Smalley, in one of his letters to the "Tribune," in December, 1894, referred to the productions of the Kelmscott Press as

possessing certain characteristics, among others "a dearness which I am almost inclined to call impudent. The profits of one book are said to approach \$50,000." Hyperbole and "are said" too often, alas! characterize the public utterances of Mr. Smalley.

On my second visit I found Mr. Morris with staff in hand, and one of his daughters attending him, just starting out for a morning walk. Mrs. Morris, whose health is delicate, no longer accompanies her husband on his "constitutionals." The secretary having offered to show me through the lower part of Kelmscott House, I asked if I might see the Rossetti portraits of Mrs. Morris and her two daughters, and these we found in the dining room, whose walls were otherwise literally covered with rich old tapestries. Old bronzes were also in profusion. On a side table was a pot of snake's-heads, a purple flower polka-dotted with white, much used by Mr. Morris in his decorations. But it were, perhaps, impertinent to describe too minutely the character of the furniture and finishings at this time, or to anticipate the catalogue of the treasures of Kelmscott House Mr. Morris is now preparing for publication, which is to be annotated, and embellished with fac-similes from his books and manuscripts. This catalogue is to be printed at Kelmscott Press, and next to the "Chaucer" must prove one of its most interesting productions.

## A VISIT TO WILLIAM MORRIS



The angels will not enter a house in which there is a dog, nor that in which there are pictures.

MOHAMMED